DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 222 396 SO 013 934

TITLE The Major Project in the Field of Education in the Latin American and Caribbean Region: Its Objectives, Characteristics, and Methods of Action.

INSTITUTION United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, Santiago (Chile). Regional Office for Education in Latin America and Caribbean.

PUB DATE 81

NOTE 20p.; Not available in paper copy due to marginal legibility throughout original document.

AVAILABLE FROM OREALC, Centro de Documentacion, Enrique Delpiano 2058, Santiago de Chile, Casilla 3187, Santiago, Chile (free).

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.

DESCRIPTORS Comparative Education; *Educational Improvement; Elementary Secondary Education; *Foreign Countries; Futures (of Society); Higher Education; International Programs; Lifelong Learning; Preschool Education; Program Descriptions; Program Development; Program Implementation

IDENTIFIERS *Caribbean Islands; *Latin America

ABSTRACT

A major project intended to improve education in the Latin American and the Caribbean countries is described. Representatives from the various countries participated in intergovernmental meetings and reached an agreement that there was a need for a project to meet unsatisfied basic educational needs by the year 2000. The specific project objectives are: (1) to ensure that by 1999 all school-age children receive schooling and are provided with a minimum of 8 to 10 years' general education; (2) to eradicate illiteracy before the end of the century and to develop and extend educational services for adults; and (3) to improve the quality and efficiency of educational systems by carrying out the necessary reforms. The project will give priority to the least privileged population groups and will involve changes and innovations in the orientation, content, and methods of education. For example, heritage and cultural values will be taught and the teaching of science and technology will be improved. Each country's own efforts will be supported by intercountry, subregional, regional, and international cooperation. (RM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

THE MAJOR PROJECT IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION IN THE LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN REGION

ED222396

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☒ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Carlos Fernandez-Caballero

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

SO 013934

Oficina Regional de Educacion, de la Unesco para America Latina y el Caribe, Santiago (Chile).

Its objectives, characteristics and methods of action

UNESCO

Regional Office for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean. Santiago, Chile, 1981.

1-BACKGROUND AND ORIGIN OF THE MAJOR PROJECT

The Major Project in the Field of Education in Latin America and the Caribbean has resulted from a consensus on the part of government representatives of the countries of the region concerning the necessity for a renewed, intensive and sustained effort to make good deficiencies and to meet unsatisfied basic educational needs between now and the year 2000, as a prerequisite for the development of those countries in line with objectives shared by all. In carrying out the necessary activities, each country's own efforts are to be seconded by inter-country, subregional, regional and international co-operation. This consensus was reached at the intergovernmental meetings listed below:

Regional Conference of Ministers of Education and Those Responsible for Economic Planning of Member States in Latin America and the Caribbean

This Conference, convened by Unesco and organized with the co-operation of the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) and the Organization of American States (OAS), was held in December 1979 in Mexico City. The participants discussed trends in education in the region during the 1970s and, in the context of overall development, identified the basic problems of education and unanimously approved a document, known as the **Mexico Declaration**, setting forth the objectives to be attained and the appropriate policy priorities for the purpose.

In this Declaration an appeal was made to the Member States "with a view to facing, together, the present-day challenges of education", while Unesco was requested "to take the initiative of putting forward a Major Project embodying the fundamental features" of the Declaration.

Twenty-first Session of the General Conference of Unesco (Belgrade, September-October 1980), Resolution 1/07 concerning the Major Project on Education in Latin America and the Caribbean

This resolution, referring to the Mexico Declaration and in particular to the appeal made to Unesco to put forward a Major Project, laid down general principles on which the Project should be based, invited Member States to *"lend full support to activities connected with the Major Project deriving from the Mexico Declaration"* and requested the Director-General of Unesco to organize in 1981 an intergovernmental regional meeting "to help in defining the objectives, strategies and methods of action for the Major Project with a view to identifying the sectors of the population to which it should progressively extend, the co-ordination, consultative and supervisory machinery for the implementation of activities and ways of obtaining support from financing sources".

Intergovernmental Regional Meeting on the Objectives, Strategies and Methods of Action of a Major Project in the field of Education in the Latin American and Caribbean region

Pursuant to the resolution already referred to, this Meeting, convened by the Director-General of Unesco, was held in Quito from 6 to 10 April 1981. The Meeting, following the guidelines laid down in the Mexico Declaration, defined the general and specific objectives

of the Major Project, the target population groups to which priority should be accorded, the essential features of a strategy for its application at the national level, and the bases for sub-regional, regional and international co-operation in support of the Project.

Nineteenth Session of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA).

This Meeting, held in Montevideo in May 1981, gave the Major Project in the Field of Education for Latin America and the Caribbean a place in the Regional Programme of Action adopted for the Third Development Decade, indicating the high priority which should be assigned to it in the context of the development efforts of the countries of the region during the 1980s.

What follows is a summary description of the Project based on the findings of the above-mentioned meetings, and more particularly on the Mexico Declaration and the Quito Recommendation, both of which were adopted unanimously and by acclamation by the representatives of the governments of Latin America and the Caribbean.

2 NEEDS THAT THE MAJOR PROJECT IS DESIGNED TO MEET

The Project is a response to the basic educational problems arising in connection with the development of the countries of the region.

Over the past two decades, various ministerial and technical meetings on education held in the region and a number of studies on the relationship between education and socio-economic and cultural development, have all arrived at the same diagnosis: despite the noteworthy expansion of educational systems, especially at the secondary and higher levels, and the repeated efforts at reform, basic educational needs of the population are still unsatisfied and are becoming more acute; the systems are not proving efficient enough, nor the quality and relevance of the education provided adequate, to meet the development requirements of individuals and societies in the region.

The Mexico Declaration pointed to the following **serious educational shortcomings**, which are closely related to the extreme poverty of vast sectors of the population:

- The continuing low enrolment rates in some countries.
- The existence in the region of 45 million illiterates out of an adult population of 159 million.
- An unduly high drop-out rate in the early years of schooling.
- Educational systems and content that are often ill-suited to the population for which they are intended.
- Maladjustments in the relationship between education and work.
- Poor linking of education with economic, social and cultural development.
- In some cases, faulty organization and administration of education systems.

3 GENERAL AIMS AND SPECIFIC OB OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

The Quito Meeting, taking the Mexico Declaration as a basis set forth, on the one hand, the general aims of the Project, in terms of its contribution to the countries' development, and, on the other, its specific educational objectives and the target populations to be accorded priority.

General aims of the Project

- To promote the full, harmonious, lifelong education of the individual through a humanistic, democratic, national, critical and creative approach, responsive to all the currents of world thought.
- To foster the organization of a just, dynamic, participatory and self-determining society capable of eliminating any form of dependence and of achieving its own realization.
- To provide study and employment opportunities for women which respect their rights and their dignity, enabling them to participate fully in all the processes of society.
- To contribute to the creation of conditions conducive to the full development, modernization and total fulfilment of individuals, including all their aspects and faculties, and of the social groups of which they form part.
- To enable all the people living in the region to gain a firm grasp of ideas, facts, and cultural, scientific and technological knowledge that will make for maturity in action and creation, and will serve all.
- To contribute to the eradication of poverty and the enhancement of economic productivity and social mobility, with a view to overcoming imbalances in the participation of various sectors of the population in the processes and benefits of socio-political, economic and cultural development and, more particularly, of those groups which are living in extreme poverty and social exclusion, and thus to ensure full equality of opportunity.
- To reinforce the interaction between education and culture, with specific emphasis on identifying communities' cultural substrata, since these are essential factors in any effective basic education work.
- To promote the conservation and development of the distinctive heritage and cultural values of the Region as a whole and of each individual country.
- To promote fellowship and national, subregional and regional co-operation, the conditions for living peacefully together, mutual understanding among the peoples and the elimination of the causes of violence.

Specific educational objectives of the Project

The following are the specific objectives of the Major Project as stated in the Quito Recommendation:

- To ensure that, by 1999 at the latest, all children of school age receive schooling and are provided with a minimum of 8 to 10 years' general education.
- To eradicate illiteracy before the end of the century and to develop and extend educational services for adults.
- To improve the quality and efficiency of educational systems by carrying out the necessary reforms.

Priority attention to the least privileged population groups

The Mexico Declaration called upon Member States to *"give highest priority to providing for the least privileged population groups, who mainly live in rural and suburban areas and whose condition calls for urgent action and the provision of a variety of opportunities in keeping with their real-life situations, with the aim of surmounting the considerable differences in living conditions still existing between them and other groups"*.

Following this general guideline, the Quito Meeting identified the population groups to which the Major Project, in the context of its general and specific objectives, will have to give priority attention, on the following terms:

- Population groups living in dire poverty, such groups generally being found in rural zones and urban fringe areas.
- Indigenous population groups which not only suffer the hardships of poverty but are also handicapped by linguistic communication difficulties.
- The adult population of 15 years and over who have been deprived of the benefits of education and are now illiterate.
- Those members of the labour force who, for lack of basic elementary-level education or technological training, are affected by unemployment or are engaged in work that serves to increase the rate of under-employment.
- The under-employed and unemployed who, through lack of occupational training, are unable to play a significant economic role in the system of production.
- Young people and children, particularly in the rural areas, who, because of the lack of educational opportunities, have been unable to attend school or who have, because of factors within and/or outside the school, dropped out.
- Children under six years of age whose circumstances as regards nutrition and family and socio-economic background are a handicap in relation to the possibility of their enrolment in the educational system, of their remaining in it and of their making satisfactory progress.
- The disabled, who must be catered for in every aspect so as to ensure their insertion or re-insertion in the educational process and the world of work.

Innovations in the orientation and content of education

The Major Project is designed to extend opportunities for basic education, in school and out-of-school, to children, young people and adults. This objective, however, cannot be attained and will not have its full significance unless changes and innovations are introduced in the orientation, content and methods of education, to ensure that its efficiency and quality are satisfactory and, more particularly, that it will be functional and relevant to the real needs and interests of individuals, communities and societies in the countries of the region. The Quito Meeting was emphatic in this respect, and explicitly singled out the quality and efficiency of education as a specific objective of the Project.

From this standpoint, the Project will devote special attention to such aspects of the quality of education or factors in it, as the following:

- Application of a type of teaching designed to foster creativeness, an understanding of world, regional, national and local realities and problems, exercises of the critical faculties and practical experience of social solidarity and participation.

6

- Promotion of the appreciation, conservation and development of the distinctive heritage and cultural values of the region and of each of the countries included in it.
- Improvement of the teaching of science and technology both in school and in non-formal education, from the earliest stages in the education of children, young people and adults.
- Forging of stronger links between the basic education of children, young people and adults and the world of work and working life.
- Extension and improvement of pre-school education, including integrated child care activities, as an essential factor in equality of opportunities and as a guarantee that due advantage will be taken of subsequent educational activities.

Requirements for the achievement of the Project's objectives

The Mexico Declaration and the Quito Recommendation set forth not only the objectives of the Major Project, but also the nature of the efforts and lines of action required for their achievement:

- Allocation of increasingly substantial budgets to education until not less than 7 or 8 per cent of the Gross National Product is earmarked for educational purposes.
- Functional and operational linkage between the programmes and activities of formal education and those of non-formal education.
- Use of the mass media in educational activities; familiarization of teachers with their use, and introduction of specific activities that will give pupils and teachers practice in the critical examination of the messages transmitted by the mass communication media.
- Revision of curricula in consonance with the development requirements of individuals and countries and, in particular, of the least privileged population groups.
- Overhandling of the systems, content and methods of educational and training programmes and advanced in-service courses for teachers of children, young people and adults, in line with the objectives of the Project.
- Revision of the structures and improvement of the processes of educational administration, including the training and qualification of administrators, particular attention to the requirements of decentralization and regionalization.
- Promotion of participation by society and its various communities in the processes of planning, administering, reforming and developing education, and more particularly in the devising and carrying out activities conducive to the attainment of the objectives of the Major Project.

4-INTERDISCIPLINARY AND INTERSECTORAL CHARACTER OF THE PROJECT

In pursuance of the guiding principles laid down in the Mexico Declaration, both resolution 1/07 of the General Conference of Unesco and the Quito Recommendation reaffirmed the interdisciplinary and intersectoral character of the Major Project, stressing *"the joint responsibility borne, for the achievement of the educational objectives in question, by the various sectors of national life, in particular those concerned with cultural, scientific and technolo-*

gical development, by the communication media and by institutions and bodies associated with educational activities".

This interdisciplinary and intersectoral character of the Major Project, required by the very nature and complexity of its objectives, applies not only to its planning and development at the national, subregional and regional levels, but also to the supporting activities offered by Unesco, other United Nations agencies, and international co-operation in general.

5-NATIONAL SUBREGIONAL AND REGIONAL DIMENSIONS OF THE PROJECT

At the Quito Meeting, the representatives of governments, despite the wide range of educational situations in the various countries and their differing views on political and social matters, unanimously adopted the same clear picture of the structure and characteristics of the Major Project, expressed as follows:

- It is a **national** project, in the sense that, within the common framework adopted at the Quito Meeting, each country establishes its own priorities, its methods and machinery for action.
- It is a **regional** project, in so far as common objectives are shared by all.

In consideration of this twofold – at once national and regional – dimension of the Major Project, the Intergovernmental Meeting at Quito recommended the establishment of:

- Such national machinery as may be considered most appropriate for the co-ordination of activities under the Major Project.
- A Regional Committee for the Major Project, for the purpose of co-ordinating its planning and operations at the regional level.

With respect to the national dimension of the Project, the Quito Meeting expressed the view that "on the principle that any process of development and change should essentially come from within, it is the countries themselves that will have to make the main effort in connection with the Project's objectives, meeting their own needs and incorporating national activities associated with the Project in their educational and overall socio-economic and cultural development policies and plans".

The Meeting also drew attention *"to the catalysing role that the Major Project was called upon to play as a key factor in renewed and sustained regional, subregional and national efforts to mobilize resources on a large scale by the year 2000, for the achievement of objectives shared by all, in which the action of Unesco and other international agencies would supplement the countries' own endeavours in a co-ordinated and effective manner".*

In this way, the Project, based essentially on each individual country's own efforts, will foster: mutual and freely-established co-operation among countries having similar problems, a common culture and language and roughly the same level of development, international collaboration within subregional groupings and co-operation among those groupings themselves, and the development of activities at the regional level to satisfy needs and interests common to all the countries of the Latin American and Caribbean region.

6-DURATION AND PHASING OF THE PROJECT

It was agreed at the Quito Meeting that the Major Project's programme of action should cover the 1980s and 1990s, a time-horizon which the Mexico Conference had deemed necessary for the full attainment of its objectives at the regional level. It was considered that, in the formulation and execution of the Project, short-term, medium-term and long-term activities would have to be identified and scheduled over a period. Emphasis was placed on the importance of the initial phase of the planning of operations at the national and regional levels, on the basis of studies and diagnoses of the actual situation and of the common and differentiated educational needs of the countries of the region.

In this connection, the Quito Recommendation scheduled the development of activities under the Project as follows:

- **An initial phase** in which priority will be given to planning and the pooling of experience (1981-1982)
- **A second phase**, principally operational, which will also include planning and evaluation on a regular basis and will match up chronologically with various medium-term planning stages.

The same Recommendation also specified in detail the stages and tasks **corresponding to the initial planning phase** of the Major Project, as follows:

Stage 1 (April 1981 - March 1982)

Task 1 Identification and clarification by the competent national authorities of their specific objectives in relation to the general objectives of the Project.

Task 2 Definition by each Member State of the national strategy that it is undertaking to apply in order to achieve its specific objectives.

Task 3 The starting of arrangements for the pooling of experience by means of seminars, meetings and study or working sessions centred on the objectives of the Major Project.

Stage 2 (April - May 1982)

On the basis of what each Member State has been able to achieve during Stage 1, identification of groups of countries wishing to collaborate in pursuing the same objectives and applying similar strategies. Such collaboration will be organized around activities defined by Member States on the basis of national priorities, the feasibility of co-operation among various institutions and programmes, and the existence of machinery and channels for co-operation already in being.

7-SUBREGIONAL REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN SUPPORT OF THE MAJOR PROJECT

The Mexico Declaration, besides requesting Unesco to take the initiative of putting forward a Major Project, appealed to international, regional and subregional organizations "to make available all their technical, administrative and financial capacity to the Governments of the region, for the purpose of giving support to their policies and programmes in the field of education".

The Quito Recommendation, for its part, addressed an appeal to the various funding bodies to lend their support to the activities under the Major Project. It similarly recommended, in particular, that the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) should provide the necessary co-operation in the context of its regional programmes and national projects.

At the request of the representatives of the region's Member States, Unesco has an important part to play in co-operation at the national, subregional and regional levels in support of the Major Project in the field of Education in the Latin American and Caribbean region.

The Quito Meeting, in its Recommendation, put forward the following requests to the Director-General and the Secretariat of Unesco, asking them:

- To take measures for the setting up of a Regional Committee for the Major Project, for the purpose of co-ordinating the planning and operations of the Project at the regional level.
- To ensure that the Organization's regional structures assist and support the national activities which may be carried out in connection with the Major Project, and that the Project promotes and consolidates the regional co-operation network among countries, with the participation of the National Commissions for Unesco in this process.
- To ensure, in agreement with Member States, the closest possible linkage between educational projects in the fields of culture, communication, the sciences and the social sciences, so as to contribute to the goals of the Major Project.
- To convene a meeting, during 1982, to analyse the results of the planning phase and draw up the programme and timetable of work for the first operational phase of the Major Project.
- To set up regional co-ordinating machinery for the purpose of providing its services to those governments which so desire.
- To redirect appropriate activities planned for the Region in Unesco's Programme and Budget for 1981-1983 (21 C/5) so as to second Member States in achieving the objectives of the Major Project.
- To take into account the objectives of the Project in the preparation of the Second Medium-Term Plan.
- To establish, at the appropriate time, the necessary contacts with the organizations of the United Nations system, and other sources that might help to finance Project activities.

In response to the foregoing recommendations, the Unesco Secretariat, within the framework of the Programme and Budget approved by the General Conference for the three year period 1981-1983, and taking into account its structures and programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean, has embarked upon the identification and programming of activities and resources that it will make available to the Member States of the region, to assist in the planning and launching of the Major Project, at the national, subregional and regional levels.

In addition to this direct action on the part of the Organization, the Unesco Secretariat intends to negotiate for the support of United Nations bodies whose aims are related to the objectives of the Major Project.

Furthermore, to supplement whatever action Member States may take to secure international economic co-operation from funding bodies, the Unesco Secretariat will make every effort to ensure that account is taken, in the co-operation policies of such bodies, of the objectives and priorities of the Major Project in the Field of Education for Latin America and the Caribbean.

8-INITIAL ACTION UNDER THE PROJECT

In accordance with the Quito Recommendation, the Member States of the region will have to embark immediately upon two lines of action:

- To establish national machinery to be responsible for the development of the Major Project.
- To make forecasts and plans for the carrying out of the Project at the national level.

National machinery to be responsible for the Project

The essential functions of this machinery, whose composition and operation will be determined by each individual country in whatever form it may deem most appropriate, will be to promote and co-ordinate Project operations at the national level and to provide contact and liaison with the machinery to set up for the development of the Project at the regional level. It is to be hoped that, in keeping with the interdisciplinary and intersectoral character of the Project, such national bodies will comprise top-level authorities from the Ministries of Education and other public and private institutions whose activities are related to the objectives of the Project.

Planning of the Project at the national level

As already mentioned, the Quito Meeting drew attention to the necessity and importance of an initial stage of planning at the national level (April 1981-1982) during which the national authorities would identify their own objectives, priorities and action strategies, in the context of the Major Project's objectives. It also recommended that a regional meeting should be held in 1982 to examine the results of this process of identification of objectives and priorities by each individual country and, on this basis, to determine the programme of work for the first operational phase of the Project at the national, subregional and regional levels.

In pursuance of the guidelines laid down at the Quito Meeting, this initial planning by each Member State in Latin America and the Caribbean for its participation in the Project will involve such operations as the following:

- An accurate, deep-reaching diagnosis of the social and educational questions related to objectives and target populations for the Major Project. This diagnosis should be concentrated, for preference, on identification of the situation and the quantitative and qualitative educational needs of the least privileged population groups, and of the set of combined educational, cultural and socio-economic measures essential for making good deficiencies or raising unsatisfactory standards of education among the population sectors concerned. This does not exclude, but on the contrary implies, an overall diagnosis of educational shortcomings, particularly at the basic levels.
- A review and evaluation of plans, projects and reforms which are already being carried out in the respective countries and which are related to the objectives and target populations of the Major Project, including those activities that are being carried out with outside technical and financial co-operation.
- Determination of the specific objectives and long-term and medium-term goals that the countries concerned are setting themselves under the Major Project, and of the programmes of action and resources proposed for that purpose, with an indication of the technical and financial co-operation that would be required to support and supplement the countries' own efforts.

Unesco in general and its offices and centres operating in the region, particularly the Regional Office for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, are ready to work with Member States, whenever and in whatever way the latter deem appropriate, both in the establishment of national machinery for purposes connected with the Major Project and in the planning and launching of operations under it.

THE MEXICO DECLARATION

Approved by acclamation
by the Regional Conference
of Ministers of Education and Those Responsible
for Economic Planning
of Member States in Latin America and the Caribbean,
organized by Unesco
with the co-operation of ECLA and OAS.

The Regional Conference of Ministers of Education and Those Responsible for Economic Planning of Member States in Latin America and the Caribbean, convened by Unesco and held in Mexico City from 4 to 13 December 1979, met in a highly encouraging spirit of consensus regarding the crucial importance of the current period of history for the countries of the region in relation to the general world situation, with clear awareness of the fact that a new stage had been reached, calling for solidarity in the affirmation of the culture unique to that part of the globe, and readiness on the part of its peoples to assume responsibility for their own destiny.

A lofty tone and a marked sense of responsibility were the key-notes of the Conference in the discussions concerning the decisive role to be assigned to education within a new style of development, that is, balanced development that would help to redirect economic activities towards greater social homogeneity and towards the production of goods and services that were genuine social and national necessities. It was therefore one of the tasks of education to give a human dimension to development by recognizing its own basic potential to build a future marked by greater cultural autonomy, greater harmony and justice in social and economic conditions, and by fulfilment of those values essential to human dignity that the peoples of the region deserved and demanded.

The Conference, having acknowledged the sustained effort that had been made by the countries of the region in the past decade to develop education, and the very noteworthy achievements in the quantitative expansion of systems and in the improvement of educational content and processes, nevertheless recognized that serious shortcomings still persisted, such as the extreme poverty of vast sectors of the population in most of the countries, and continuing low enrolment rates in some of them; the existence in the region of 45 million illiterates out of an adult population of 159 million; an unduly high drop-out rate in the early years of schooling; educational systems and content that were very often ill-suited to the population for which they were intended; maladjustments in the relationship between education and work; the poor linking of education with economic, social and cultural development and in some cases faulty organization and administration of education systems, which still bore the stamp of heavy centralization from a normative and functional point of view. In the light of the foregoing, the Conference adopted the following Declaration:

The Conference declares:

That a developed nation is one whose people are well-informed, cultured, efficient, productive, responsible and possess a sense of solidarity;

That no country can extend its development beyond the stage reached by its education;

That development is measured not merely by the goods or resources that a community can command, but essentially by the quality of the individuals who produce or use them;

That *being*, not *having*, should predominate in the framing and shaping of the overall development policies of the various countries;

That education is an essential tool for the release of man's highest potential to create a more just and balanced society, and that political and economic independence cannot be fully attained unless the population is educated, has a firm grasp of reality and assumes responsibility for its destiny;

That there is an urgent need to intensify educational action as a necessary condition for the achievement of authentic development and to bring educational systems into line with the governing principles of social justice, so that they strengthen awareness, participation, solidarity and organizing ability, especially among underprivileged groups;

That the forging of adequate structural links between formal and non-formal education will make a major contribution to the achievement of development in the region;

That education should give pride of place to the transmission of moral values, the dignity of human life and the development of the individual, in a world increasingly torn by conflict and violence, against which background those values should be recognized and respected;

That the relationship between education and culture is being increasingly affected by the impact of the mass media, which have expanded very rapidly in the region and are exerting a powerful influence over the daily lives of all sectors of society, an influence which should make a positive contribution to education;

That the success that is sought in transforming curricula will depend on how such transformations interact with the specific needs, interests and problems of the social groups of the community;

That the effort entailed by the development of the region will have to assume an integrated form in such a way that education, science, technology, culture, communication, the removal of linguistic barriers, the relationship to work, social and political organization and economic progress will all tend to work towards the fundamental goal of the well-being of mankind;

That there is a need to strengthen scientific development, which, through activities of research, reflection, observation and creative experience and intuition, is conducive to the generation of new knowledge;

That uninterrupted development and progress in all fields of knowledge, and especially in science and technology, and economic and social transformations require that education systems be designed and operate within the context of life-long education, that a close relationship be established between school and out-of-school education and that appropriate use be made of the scope offered by the mass media;

That the training of people who are capable of accepting the implications of their own culture and of building scientific progress into it is essential if they are to create, develop and adapt appropriate technologies, as required by the differing contexts of the region;

That education, without prejudice to its universal scope, must essentially promote knowledge of the realities of the country, neighbouring countries and the region as objectively as possible if the past is to be retrieved, substance to be given to the present and guidelines to be laid down for the future;

That there is a need to establish a new international economic order as a basic prerequisite if the countries of the region are to carry out their national projects and consequently move on to higher levels of development that will satisfy their legitimate national needs, particularly in the fields of education, employment and productive work;

That international, intra-regional and bilateral co-operation should be instrumental in developing a renewed respect for the national goals and interests of all peoples and in ensuring that progress is made towards a new international economic order that will take account of the needs, features and aspirations of our peoples, with a view to contributing to the strengthening of co-operation among the States of the region, while fostering joint activities that will bring about greater social justice.

The Conference further declares that the Member States should:

– Provide a minimum of 8 to 10 years' general education and establish as their goal to incorporate all children of school age in the system not later than 1999, in accordance with national education policies;

– Adopt a clear-cut policy with a view to eradicating illiteracy before the end of the century and to extending educational services for adults;

– Allocate increasingly substantial budgets to education until not less that 7 or 8 per cent of the gross national product is earmarked for educational purposes, with the aim of making up for the existing shortfall and of ensuring that education will make a full contribution to development and become the driving force behind it;

– Give highest priority to providing for the least privileged population groups, who mainly live in rural and suburban areas and whose condition calls for urgent action and the provision of a variety of opportunities in keeping with their real-life situations, with the aim of surmounting the considerable differences in living conditions still existing

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

between them and other groups;

– Undertake the necessary reforms which will ensure that education takes into account the features, needs, aspirations and cultural values of every people, and which will give impetus to and renovate science teaching and will be instrumental in forging closer links between education systems and the world of work;

– Use all available means, ranging from the school and the communication media to natural resources, and make a special effort to transform curricula at an early opportunity so as to make them more relevant to the needs of underprivileged groups, while relying for that purpose on the active participation of the population involved;

– Adopt effective measures for renovating systems for the training of teachers, prior to, and following their qualification, in order to provide them with the possibility of adding to and updating their stock of knowledge and teaching capability;

– Assist teachers in economic and social terms by creating working conditions that will ensure that they enjoy a position in keeping with their social importance and professional dignity;

– Ensure, by viewing economic growth within the broader context of social development, that educational planning is closely linked to the economic, social and overall planning of each country;

– Give special attention to the formulation of objectives and programmes for the quantitative expansion and qualitative improvement of higher education, reconciling university autonomy with the sovereignty of the State;

– Ensure that educational planning promotes the participation and incorporation of all groups and institutions involved in one way or another in both formal and non-formal education endeavours;

– Ensure educational organization and administration in keeping with new requirements which, in most countries of the region, demand greater decentralization of decision-making and organizational processes, greater flexibility as a means of ensuring multi-sectoral action and lines of emphasis that will provide an incentive to innovation and change.

The Conference appeals:

To the Member States:

To set themselves, for the forthcoming decades, the fundamental and vitally urgent task of combating extreme poverty by using all available resources and means to ensure the general introduction of complete primary or basic education for all children of school age, to eliminate illiteracy and to intensify, gradually and thoroughly, programmes designed to make full provision for children of pre-school age who live in conditions of social deprivation;

To continue to promote the exchange of experience and co-operation with a view to facing, together, the present-day challenges of education and to devise courses of action that will lead to full development of their potentialities and the strengthening of national independence;

To all those participating in the task of education in the region:

To associate themselves with the main lines of thrust, reflections and recommendations of this Conference so that, through their day-to-day work, their experience and their critical acumen they can contribute to the effective implementation of the objectives formulated here of broadening, speeding up and renovating the educational process in all the countries of the region.

To the international, regional and subregional organizations:

To make available all their technical, administrative and financial capacity to the Governments of the region for the purpose of giving support to their policies and programmes in the field of education.

To Unesco:

To continue to collaborate assiduously in the rapid establishment of a new international economic order;

To take the iniciative of putting forward a major project embodying the fundamental features of this Declaration;

To publicize this Mexico Declaration by all possible means.

The Conference expresses, lastly, its deepest gratitude:

To Unesco, for having convened this vitally important Conference and for having endeavoured to ensure that it effectively fulfilled its purpose of working for the further development of the education systems of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and accordingly of promoting the progress and well-being of its peoples;

To the Government and People of Mexico, for their warm hospitality and their fraternal welcome, and for having provided the most appropriate conditions and facilities for ensuring that this appointment with history would take place under the most propitious circumstances.

Mexico, D. F., 13 December 1979

RECOMMENDATION BY THE QUITO MEETING ON THE MAJOR PROJECT ON EDUCATION IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

The Intergovernmental Regional Meeting on the Objectives, Strategies and Methods of Action for a Major Project in the Field of Education in the Latin America and Caribbean Region, held in Quito from 6 to 11 April 1981 and hereinafter referred to as the "Quito Meeting",

1. **Reaffirming** the principles and objectives set forth in the Mexico Declaration approved by acclamation by the Regional Conference of Ministers of Education and Those Responsible for Economic Planning of Member States in Latin America and the Caribbean, organized by Unesco with the co-operation of ECLA and OAS (Mexico City, 4-13 December 1979),

2. **Considering** that the said Declaration appeals to Member States "to continue to promote the exchange of experience and co-operation with a view to facing, together, the present-day challenges of education and to devise courses of action that will lead to full development of their potentialities and the strengthening of national independence",

3. **Bearing in mind** the appeal made to Unesco in the same Declaration "to take the initiative of putting forward a Major Project embodying the fundamental features" of the Mexico Declaration,

4. **Recalling** resolution 1/07 adopted by the General Conference of Unesco at its twenty-first session (Belgrade, September-October 1980) concerning the Major Project on Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, whereby the General Conference defined the general framework and characteristics of the said Major Project and invited the Member States of Latin America and the Caribbean "to take all necessary steps to ensure that the objectives set forth in the Mexico Declaration can be attained by the end of the century",

5. **Considering** in particular that the said resolution requested the Director-General "to organize in 1981 an intergovernmental regional meeting (category II) to help in defining the objectives, strategies and methods of action for the Major Project, with a view to identifying the sectors of the population to which it should progressively extend, the co-ordination, consultative and supervisory machinery for the implementation of activities, and ways of obtaining support from financing sources",

6. **Considering** the statements and speeches made and the discussions held at the "Quito Meeting", in which it was pointed out that education is central to the relationship between the individual and society, between the rights of the individual and the duty of the state and between the rights of the individual and his social relationships and that, at this present moment of history, it also represents a commitment that serves to promote respect for human rights in their personal, economic and political aspects as the foundation of every politically organized society within the context of its own specific sovereignty and within that of international relations,

7. **Taking account** particularly of the recommendations made both in the plenary meetings and in the meetings of Commissions I and II, in which all delegations expressed their interest, subject to the decisions that their governments might take, in carrying out the Major Project as promptly and energetically as possible,

8. **Considering** also that the peace and security of the countries of our region can only be consolidated through radical social reforms and educational action based on the fundamental ethical values and objectives from which human freedom and dignity derive their full meaning,

9. **Considering** that the Major Project should assist in solving development problems, provide components that will help to eliminate any form of dependency and strengthen the will to live in peace with all the countries of the world, as set forth by the member countries at the Quito Meeting, in order to:

   (a) promote the full, harmonious, lifelong education of the individual through a humanistic, democratic, national, critical and creative approach responsive to all the currents of world thought,

   (b) foster the organization of a just, dynamic, participatory and self-determining society capable of eliminating any form of dependence and of achieving its own realization,

   (c) provide study and employment opportunities for women which respect their rights and their dignity, enabling them to participate fully in all the processes of society,

   (d) contribute to the creation of conditions conducive to the full development, modernization and total fulfilment of individuals, including all their aspects and

16

faculties, and of the social groups of which they form part,

(e) enable all the people living in the region to gain a firm grasp of ideas, facts, and cultural, scientific and technological knowledge that will make for maturity in action and creation, and will serve all,

(f) contribute to the eradication of poverty and the enhancement of economic productivity and social mobility with a view to overcoming imbalances in the participation of various sectors of the population in the processes and benefits of socio-political, economic and cultural development and, more particularly, of those groups which are living in extreme poverty and social exclusion,

(g) reinforce the interaction between education and culture, with specific emphasis on identifying communities' cultural substrata, since these are essential factors in any effective basic education work,

(h) promote the conservation and development of the distinctive heritage and cultural values of the region as a whole and of each individual country,

(i) promote fellowship and national, subregional and regional co-operation, the conditions for living peacefully together, mutual understanding among the peoples and the elimination of the causes of violence,

10. **Considering** that it is of the highest importance to state in explicit terms that the objectives and goals for this important stage in our region's history set out in the Mexico Declaration represent only the starting point of an operation based on the political will to launch a process of economic and social development centred on man and his all-round education; that the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean are aware of the need to provide for all their citizens a complete general education leading up to the higher levels of education, having regard to the far-ranging social changes and rapid progress of science and technology that are features of the world today, and that they also desire to develop a complete educational system that will include not only such traditional subsystems as general, technical and vocational education, teacher education and the training of university personnel, but also those of pre-school education, special education, adult education and out-of-school education,

11. **Recommends** that Member States endorse, and include as priorities in their educational policies, the following specific overall objectives for the Major Project, derived from the interdisciplinary thinking conducted at the Quito Meeting:

(a) to ensure that, by 1999 at the latest, all children of school age receive schooling and are provided with a minimum of eight to ten years' general education;

(b) to eradicate illiteracy before the end of the century and to develop and extend educational services for adults;

(c) to improve the quality and efficiency of educational systems by carrying out the necessary reforms;

12. **Suggests**, that, for the achievement of these specific objectives, they:

(a) allocate increasingly substantial budgets to education until not less than 7 or 8 per cent of the gross national product is earmarked for educational purposes;

(b) overhaul their systems for the training and qualification of teachers and ensure efficient educational administration and supervision and the adaptation of content and structures to the varying needs of the individual and the community;

(c) ensure that the groundwork is laid for self-sustaining scientific and technological development, promoting and stimulating the growth of scientific and technological research institutions and the teaching of science and technology at the various levels of education;

(d) link education with productive work, either through a self-management process or through interaction between educational centres, the community and its institutions;

(e) promote a system of teaching focused on creativity and based on continuing investigation in a liberating spirit, giving work its true vital dimension, in line with the interests, characteristics, socio-economic needs and aspirations and cultural values of individuals and society;

(f) define the professional qualifications required in the various sectors of national life, so as to devise appropriate curricula for the training and qualification of human resources through formal and non-formal education promoting lifelong education;

(g) make full use of the communication media and their idiom for educational activities, by preparing material suitable for use by newspapers, journals, radio broadcasting stations, cinemas or television

channels; familiarizing teachers with audio-visual forms of communication so that they can apply them in their work; and introducing specific school activities that will allow students and teachers to carry out exercises in the critical examination of messages transmitted by the communication media;

(h) train their administrators and teaching staff to assume new responsibilities and tasks, promote the economic and social well-being of teachers, and adapt educational administration so that its operation and structures can be adjusted to these new functions and situations;

(i) initiate specific programmes designed to deal with the problems of malnutrition affecting children and mothers-to-be in deprived areas, thereby establishing the physiological bases necessary for them to profit from educational action;

(j) promote pre-school education programmes as an essential instrument for achieving equality of opportunity and avoiding one of the causes of dropping out from school;

(k) initiate a campaign to publicize the objectives of the Project so that the community, duly informed, may be able to support and co-operate with discrimination in the Major Project;

13. **Reaffirms** the priority to be accorded, within the framework of the specific objectives of the Major Project, to socially excluded groups of people and, in particular, children largely deprived of education in consequence of lack of schools, absenteeism or dropping out; illiterate adults; people living in rural areas disavantaged by their geographical, social, cultural and economic circumstances; the inhabitants of urban "slums"; the Indian populations generally subject to a high degree of social isolation, exploitation, sickness and ignorance of the contemporary world; migrants; the unemployed; and the handicapped;

14. **Recommends** that Member States develop policies suited to the interests and needs of these populations and that they maintain at the national level such unity in the formal and informal educational system as to offer a common and coherent body of resources and structures conducive to the development of aptitudes and knowledge that will enable these groups to become fully integrated into working life and to pursue studies within the educational system, in institutions adapted to their needs:

(a) for socially excluded ethnic groups and the economically deprived (Indian populations, the unemployed and socially excluded urban groups): to promote by all possible means their full social integration and their active participation in overcoming their problems, by strengthening the institutions that supply them with services, by encouraging wider and better use of the media, by promoting their training for occupational activities or those linked with production, by fostering their distinctive forms of cultural expression, including language, and, finally, by training the staff required to act as leaders in educational, cultural and social processes;

(b) for the rural population in general: to adopt measures leading to the effective provision of educational opportunities for all, with curricula appropriate to the environment, of equivalent quality to those applied in urban areas and based on a careful study of the factors influencing living conditions in these areas; to adjust educational structures, methods and timetables and teaching materials to the requirements of the different areas; to create educational institutions and strengthen those that have already demonstrated greatest efficiency in the region, linking their action to that of other services contributing to rural development; to foster mutual co-operation between the community and formal and non-formal educational programmes; to encourage local forms of cultural expression, including linguistic forms, and to train qualified staff for the carrying out of the various educational, cultural and social tasks involved;

(c) for the various age-groups: to develop distinctive educational, cultural and technological activities adapted to their special needs and interests;

15. **Recommends** that Member States, with due regard to the specific objectives of the Major Project and the lines of action formulated, bring about the institutional, technical and financial changes necessary to allow of and promote the achievement of the objectives of the Major Project in the national context; that they mobilize for this purpose all the national resources available within their strictly educational institutions and elsewhere; that they promote the establishment of machinery and structures which will allow of full participation by the people concerned in the identification of their needs and expectations and of ways of meeting them and, in those countries where the features of the educational system allow of it, promote centralization of political decision-making and decentralization

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

or devolution in administrative matters and any others that they may deem appropriate;

16. **Affirms** the interdisciplinary and intersectoral character of the Project and the joint responsibility borne, for the achievement of the educational objectives in question, by the various sectors of national life, in particular those concerned with cultural, scientific and technological development, by the communication media and by institutions and bodies associated with educational activities;

17. **Recommends** that Member States, with due regard to the specific objectives and recommended lines of action, take steps to bring about:

(a) close linking of educational planning with the economic and social planning of each country;

(b) closer co-ordination between education and the mass media, cultural action and educational action;

(c) closer links between education and the world of work, by extending lifelong adult education and associating formal school education more closely with out-of-school education and other factors in development, and by introducing a measure of productive work into the process of education;

(d) more thorough study of science and technology, and wider spreading of scientific and technological knowledge, as essential components of education, with a view to the endogenous development of science and technology;

(e) active participation by higher education, in support of the Major Project, in relation to research, teacher training and professional activities, enlisting for this purpose the co-operation of specialized regional centres in these and other fields;

18. **Invites** each Member State to formulate a national plan of action covering this Major Project for Latin America and the Caribbean up to the year 2000, allowing for the Project to be developed gradually, continuously and over a long period so as to respond progressively to the agreed objectives, for which purpose it shall be divided into:

an initial phase in which priority will be given to planning and the pooling of experience (1981 - 1982);

a second, principally operational, phase which will also include planning and evaluation on a regular basis and will match up chronologically with various medium-term planning stages;

19. **Recommends** that Member States, in accordance with the agreed sequence of phases, embark immediately after this Meeting on the planning phase of the Major Project, which will comprise the following stages and tasks:

Stage 1 (April 1981 - March 1982);

Task 1: Identification and clarification by the competent national authorities of their specific objectives in relation to the general objectives of the Project, expressed in terms of:

(a) populations described by indicators such as age group, sex, socio-occupational category, geographical location, ethnic or linguistic group, physical condition, etc.;

(b) educational objectives, specifying for each of these quantified target populations the level of achievement expected;

(c) precise dates by which Member States hope to achieve these goals;

(d) zone or region in which activities are to be conducted.

Task 2: Definition by each Member State of the national strategy that it is undertaking to apply in order to achieve its specific objectives, combining consideration of:

(a) the areas of educational, cultural, information and technological activity which will be called into play;

(b) the national resources and also the regional and international resources which are necessary, in the context of the Major Project, for carrying out that strategy;

Task 3: The starting of arrangements for the pooling of experience by means of seminars, meetings and study or working sessions centred on the objectives of the Major Project;

Stage 2 (April - May 1982);

On the basis of what each Member State has been able to achieve during Stage 1, identification of groups of countries wishing to collaborate in pursuing the same objectives and in applying similar strategies. Such collaboration will be organized around activities defined by Member States on the basis of national priorities, the feasibility of co-operation among various institutions and programmes, and the existence of machinery and channels for co-operation already in being;

20. **Recommends** that Member States:

assign to the national body considered most appropriate responsibility for co-ordinating

19

the activities of the Major Project, maintaining effective communication with the subregional, regional and international institutions taking part in the Project;

co-ordinate their own policies in all international education forums and request such bodies to join in Unesco's efforts and in those that the countries are now to undertake in support of educational development;

study ways in which their bilateral activities could be linked to the Major Project, so as to give it greater financial and technical support;

promote horizontal co-operation through the establishment of an information network to promote supply and demand in respect of co-operation;

21. **Appeals** to the various funding bodies to lend their financial support to national and regional activities which will help in achieving the objectives of the Major Project; and recommends in particular that UNDP provide the necessary co-operation for national and regional projects directed to achieving these objectives, and continue the assistance it is at present affording to the Network of Educational Systems for Development in Central America and Panama (RED Project) and that ECLA and UNDP continue their support for the "Education and Development" project which is considered to be of particular interest in connection with the Major Project;

22. **Requests** the Director-General of Unesco:

to take measures for the setting up of a Regional Committee for the Major Project, for the purpose of co-ordinating the planning and operations of the Project at the regional level;

to ensure that the Organization's regional structures assist and support the national activities which may be carried out in connection with the Major Project, and that the Project promotes and consolidates the regional co-operation network among countries, with the participation of the National Commissions for Unesco in this process;

to ensure, in agreement with Member States, the closest possible linkage between educational projects and projects in the fields of culture, communication, the sciences and the social sciences so as to contribute to the goals of the Major Project;

to convene a meeting, during 1982, to analyse the results of the planning phase and draw up the programme and timetable of work for the first operational phase of the Major Project;

23. **Requests** the Director-General of Unesco:

to set up regional co-ordinating machinery for the purpose of providing its services to those governments which so desire; these services might cover the following aspects:

(a) collaboration with national bodies in the organization and execution of the planning tasks;

(b) the carrying out of studies and research for the preparation and application of appropriate methodological instruments and models;

(c) organization of periodical technical meetings in order to pool experience and information collected and processed in the countries, to compare the problems encountered, etc.;

(d) preparation with the national bodies of the first meeting of the Regional Committee and collaboration in its development;

to redirect appropriate activities planned for the region in Unesco's Programme and Budget for 1981-1983 (21 C/5) so as to second Member States in achieving the objectives of the Major Project;

to take into account the objectives of the Project in the preparation of the second Medium-Term Plan;

to establish, at the appropriate time, the necessary contacts with the organizations of the United Nations system, and other sources that might help to finance Project activities;

24. **Requests** the Director-General to transmit this Recommendation to ECLA for examination at its next regular session, to be held in Montevideo in May 1981, so that it may be taken into account in working out the Development Strategies for the Eighties;

25. **Requests** the Director-General to publicize this Recommendation as widely as possible; and

Urges those responsible for educational tasks in the region to encourage teachers, administrators and students and all sections of the community to interest themselves in it so as to achieve the broadest possible participation in activities directed towards the attainment of the objectives of the Major Project in Education in the Latin American and Caribbean Region.

Quito, 10 April 1981.